

Maine Learning Results Review Advisory Committee

August 24, 2005

103 Cross Building, Augusta, Maine

In attendance: Anita Bernhardt, Brian Doore, Dan Hupp, Becky Berger, Bonnie Fortini, Brian Dancause, Karoldene Barnes, Josh Nadel, Tom Major, Deborah Howard, Dean Collins, Francis Eberle, Jon Geiger, Ellie Multer, Nancy Perkins, Peggy Rotundo, and Patrick Phillips

Anita called the meeting to order at 9:00, thanked everybody for coming. The group quickly provided a summer update and then moved onto the agenda.

The main goals of the meeting were: 1) Provide a general update on the first three meetings of the Content Area Panels and solicit specific and general feedback regarding the timetable and organization for the next phase of the work, 2) Update on Instructional Context Group, 3) Discussion and feedback on Guiding Principals and proposal for next step of revisions.

Patrick was unable to attend the morning session, but would be there in the afternoon to discuss the SAU (School Administrative Unions) review. Anita posted a piece of chart paper to keep track of questions for Patrick upon his return.

Anita started the meeting by addressing the burning issues – calendar and status of the review, review of material sent via email (with agenda).

Francis mentioned that he was part of a mathematics group that seemed to be on a parallel track. UMaine System Chancellor has convened a Committee on College Readiness with emphasis on writing and reading and Math. This group is providing input to National Experts and the overall review process, although the writing group is ahead of the mathematics group. Anita will contact Lynne Miller, who is overseeing this work to assure open communications between the groups.

A request was made that Anita provide a chart of groups whose work connects to the review and the relationship that each group has to the MLR review (see below).

A list was made of what we thought were external influences on our process:

- 1) UMaine System Chancellor's committee on College Readiness
 - a) writing/reading subgroup – Ann Dean
 - b) Math group
- 2) State board select panel – VIP (new vision)
- 3) Governor's Pre-K – 16 Seamless transition Group
- 4) NGA Grant and Adolescence Literacy Grant

- 5) Compact for Higher Education
- 6) Citizenship Task Force
- 7) Professional organizations – Maine Educators Association
- 8) SAT testing replacing MEA's at 11th grade.
- 9) Legislature (Education Committee)
- 10) Context group

Internal influences:

- 1) Dept of Education
- 2) Us – Maine Learning Results Review Advisory Committee
- 3) Content Area Panelist

There was a brief discussion about the Grade Level Equivalencies and the relationships with the MLR.

Karoldene mentioned the need to ensure that teachers and others were being kept informed of the process and progress being made in the review cycle. Maine Educators Association (MEA) should be passing the word around but it seems that there is a gap in discussion.

It was noted that Governor Baldacci is creating a Pre-K – 16 seamless transition panel.

The Dept of Ed has received various grants including a grant on literacy. ***Question for Patrick – DOE Support for Media Campaign connection to the PR \$ with literacy work.***

Anita shared the article in the Bangor Daily News, “*Learning Results Revision Underway*” by Ruth-Ellen Cohen and was curious why other papers did not pick up on the article. ***Question for Patrick – How do we provide common training/information about the MLR review for schools, same message to all that would be read or viewed (VHS, CD, Email, Web).***

Anita then summarized what the Content Area Panelist (CAP) had done during there meetings over the summer:

July 22nd – all groups met for an info session and had a phone conversation with the National Content Area Experts (NCAE). There was a lot of energy during the meeting with the NCAE. Proposed revised documents were given to the CAP after the phone conversations with the NCAE.

August 10-11 – Focus questions were given to the CAP in reviewing the proposed revised documents. The morning was structured so that the CAP could discuss the proposed revised documents and the NCAE listening to the conversation, thus allowing

issues to come onto the table. During lunch the NCAE addressed the concerns/questions raised by the CAP. After lunch the CAP worked collaboratively with the NCAE on the issues that they had addressed. CAP participated in a working dinner and the NCAE left the next morning. (Anita commented that she realized the need for the NCAE to have stayed throughout the day on August 11th too.)

11 August – Standards and Performance Indicators – CAP reviewed the documents to determine which performance indicators were essential or not and which needed to be edited. CAP had to ground their rationale for their reasoning the national standards or educational research or field knowledge, not changes due to one person's experience. By in large – the group accepted NCAE's input. There was reduction in the number of Performance Indicators in ELA, Math and Health.

Anita noted the overall organization for the work proposed by the national experts.

Content Areas

Clusters

Standards – Pre-k to Diploma

Strands

Performance Indicators (by grade span)

Bullets (ideas within Performance Indicators)

- We looked at page 13 of the Maine Learning Results. There are 8 standards for secondary level. Weakness – too broad and too shallow. Concerns for ELA – Narrative writing and comparative writing. Greater emphasis on kinds of writing – less spread-out needs to be deeper.

The question for the group concerns the bullets listed under the PI's. Are they a blueprint or examples for both MEA's and LAS. This is critical information for the CAP to have before their next meeting on September 23, 2005. Anita already raised this question with a small group at the Maine Department of Education. The Advisory Committee will discuss it today and Anita will take the feedback to Susan Gendron and Patrick Phillips for a policy decision. The expectation for the bullets would be: what knowledge would be expected at the end of that grade span.

Anita went over the rest of the calendar:

September 23rd and 30th ELA and Math will meet

September 29th and 30th Health and PE will meet

October 31st and November 9-10th all the other five content areas will meet –

Two additional dates will be determined in December for the other five content area specialists to meet. Unfortunately these meetings will be held in southern Maine due the unavailability of space further north for such a large group.

If we stay on schedule all working drafts should be completed and ready to be posted on the web by December 2005.

IMPLICATIONS

Blueprint

- All schools responsible for
 - o Narrow curriculum
 - o Negative
- Defines essential for all students
 - o Clear direction
- Focus on discrete pieces will not
Yield broader skill development.

Examples

- Academic freedom
- Not literal
- Not exclusive base for assessment

- Consider historical experience, best practice, research, political context, potential for (re)energizing teachers.

Jon added the *Industrial Point of View* – academics are disconnected from world. Need to reeducate especially in the areas of Math and Writing. CAP may not be aware of what the rest of the world wants or needs. It is critical that we bring the document to business focus groups for immediate feedback.

Francis suggested that bullets should be examples otherwise teachers will not or will not be allowed to go past bulleted listed. For example, the food chain can be taught by giving examples of ocean life, but there are some teachers indicating that their administrators will not allow them this flexibility to teach ecosystem through ocean life because ocean life is not directly addressed in the MLR.

Discussion continued on bullets vs examples.

Becky stated teaching to examples given in the proposed ELA document will not provide us readers and that research shows what we have is a very narrowed and other research shows conflicting data.

Do the performance indicators capture the performance of the students? We have two issues limitation or examples of progression. There are DANGERS in the statement that the PI's are examples or blueprints.

Josh stated that students need to ENJOY reading and the standards do not include that.

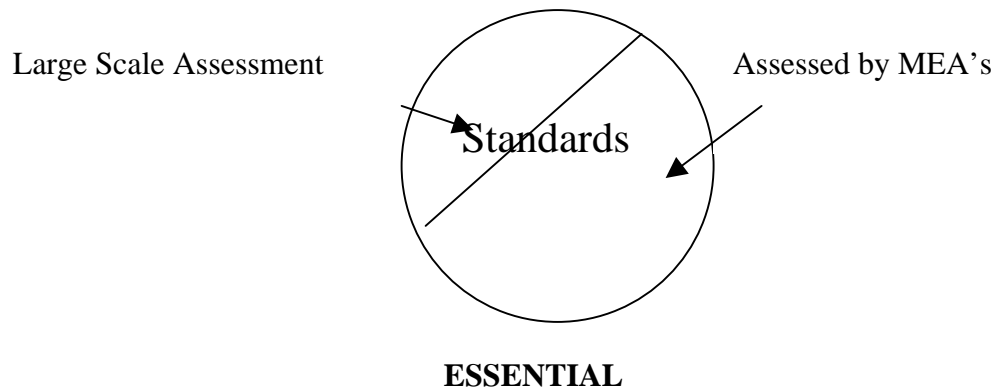
Brian gave his analogy of the Macintosh and Technology. We plan for the future really without knowing what is there.

Anita took a thumbs up/sideways/down vote on the bullets for MEA's and LAS's prior to lunch. It was felt that the bullets should be used for MEA's but not LAS's.

Following lunch the conversation focused on the use of the bullets as a blueprint for LAS's and the consequences of making the bullets part of legislative rule. Patrick joined the group for this part of the conversation. Patrick asked at bullet level how much will

change over time? The response was that for ELA/Math – not much, but for science – maybe a lot.

- Concern was raised at wording level – flexibility to interpret bullets to avoid unintended consequences.
- Can bullets be considers “routine technical rules” that the MDOE could change?
- Clarity at bullet level is important/essential for precision at bullet level.
- If we have two documents, one with bullets and one without, is there a potential for misunderstanding. (Conn. has two documents)



Patrick asked if we should invite Pam Rolfe to discuss the Blueprint of LAS. There should be no expectation to increase PI's at the local level.

- Having a blueprints allow comparability between schools.
- There is less flexibility with bullets if they become law.
- Flexibility is a double-edged sword – on one side is the possibility to be adaptive – on the other hand is the threat to stability in the system.

Procedural Rules vs Routine Technical would allow DOE to change only bullets but not the standards and performance indicators.

Patrick stated – we must teach smaller set of things to greater depth (60-70% of year) to allow districts to do other things

- Widening gap between socio-economic classes – clear standards can /should help bridge gap.

- If this set of standards is a blueprint of essentials, it must really be very lean
- Feasibility must always be kept in mind. Context discussion will guide/improve feasibility.
- Common language critical for understanding standards.
- STUDENT CHOICE: Mustn't lose its potential.
- Is whole standards design (w/content standards) too antiquated for 21st Century skills?
- Recommendation that State begins examining/moving toward real conceptual integration.

Vote on bullets – divided group – more favored using bullets as blueprint for LAS (then the previous vote), but not consensus, 5 down and 9 up.

Ellie – we are leading to integration across the curriculum and we need to do it NOW!

There is a tension of focus and/or narrowing of standards.

Patrick gave us a brief insight into the SAU review process that the DOE is going to do between October 15th and January 15th. Interested parties can look at informational letter # 3 for more information. Letter has been sent out to all SAU's informing them of their upcoming visits. Schedule has not been determined as of yet. DOE visitors will be spending one day in each district looking at three standards:

- Student Focus
- Content and Instruction
- Accountability through Assessment, Reflection and Action

The Self-Assessment Tool for SAU Review Process is available online.

Once again – the web page: www.maine.gov/education/lres/review allows the public to see and understand the process we are undertaking in this review cycle.

There are two professional development opportunities that were mentioned:

Wabanaki UMF Sept 28

EAST (Eastern Alliance in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics on Friday November 4th, 2005 South Portland.

Schedule of upcoming meetings:

September 22nd

October 18th

November 17th

December 13th.

Bonnie – will be the scribe for the September 22nd meeting.